

CONTROLLING THE FOOD SUPPLIES 1305

from home sources, and were
latterly

handicapped by the lack of this chemical.

As for nitrates, their most popular
source before
the War was imported nitrate of soda.
But munition

manufacture combined with the
growing

Supply of shortage of shipping to cut down
supplies.

nitrates Such nitrate as could be
imported was

wanted for explosives.
Accordingly the

Acland Committee on Fertilisers, set up
by the

Ministry of Agriculture in October,
1915, under

the chairmanship of Mr. (now Sir Francis)
Acland,

had to face the difficult task of persuading
farmers to

use the unfamiliar sulphate of ammonia,
which had

for years been produced in large
quantities at our gas

works as a by-product, and exported
abroad to

appreciative foreigners, who knew its
great value as

a fertiliser. The Acland Committee
carried out

useful though tedious spadework in this
educational

field, and by the time their functions were
transferred

to the Ministry of Food at the end of
1916, farmers

were slowly beginning to use sulphate of
ammonia.

The Ministry stimulated a larger use of this
ingredient.

The growth of the habit is shown by the
figures for

consumption of this fertiliser in the last
three years

of the War :—

1916	.	.	.	.
75,000 tons				
1917	-	.	.	.
150,000 tons				
1918	*	.	.	*

230,000 tons

The provision of phosphatic manures was handicapped by the fact that there was not a convenient home supply of soluble phosphates. Our superphosphate of lime was made by treating imported phosphatic rock with acid, and imports